

App. No. 09/936,674
Amdt. Dated May 12, 2004
Reply to Final Office Action of February 24, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. – 13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) An apparatus for treating substrates, comprising:

a first process container which is provided with at least one opening in a wall of said first process container, wherein said at least one opening is closeable from outside of said first process container via a substrate; and

a second process container that is disposed adjacent to said first process container such that one wall of said second process container is at least partly said wall of said first process container in which said at least one opening is provided, whereby said at least said one opening connects said first and said second process containers and is also closeable from the direction of said first process container.

15. (original) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said at least one opening is formed in an essentially vertical wall of said first process container.

16. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein a sealing element is provided that forms a periphery of said at least one opening.

17. (original) An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said sealing element is provided with an undercut and a sealing lip, which are formed by milling out a sealing material that forms said sealing element.

18. (original) An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein a contact

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element is provided to provide electrical contact with a surface of said substrate that faces said first process container.

19. (original) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said contact element extends into a region of an undercut of said sealing element.

20. (original) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein an electrode is disposed across from said at least one opening.

21. (original) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said electrode is an electrode plate, especially an anode, and is provided with openings for allowing at least one fluid to pass through.

22. (original) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said electrode is moveable toward and away from said at least one opening, and wherein said at least one opening is closeable by said electrode from the direction of said first process container.

23. (original) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein at least one sealing element is provided on at least one of said electrode and a container wall that surrounds said at least one opening.

24. (original) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said at least one sealing element radially surrounds said electrode and projects axially beyond a surface that faces said at least one opening.

25. (original) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein at least one treatment fluid that is introducible into said first processing container is at least one of a metal-containing electrolyte and an etching medium.

26. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 14, for treating

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substrates, comprising:

a first process container which is provided with at least one opening in a wall of said first process container, wherein said at least one opening is closeable from outside of said first process container via a substrate; and

a second process container that is disposed adjacent to said first process container such that one wall of said second process container is at least partly said wall of said first process container in which said at least one opening is provided, whereby said at least one opening is also closeable from the direction of said first process container, and wherein said second process container forms at least one of a rinsing chamber, a drying chamber, and a surface-conditioning chamber.

27. (original) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein a substrate holder is provided that includes a main body and at least one vacuum finger that is moveable relative to said main body.

28. (original) An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said at least one vacuum finger is disposed centrally in a surface of said main body that faces said substrate, and is recessible in said main body of said substrate holder.

29. (original) An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein a pressure sensor is disposed in a vacuum line that communicates with said at least one vacuum finger.

30. (original) An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein a plurality of fixed vacuum openings are provided in a surface of said main body of said substrate holder that faces said substrate, and wherein said vacuum openings radially surround said at least one vacuum finger.

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31. (original) An apparatus according to claim 30, wherein said vacuum openings are supplyable with vacuum separately from said at least one vacuum finger.

32. (original) An apparatus according to claim 30, wherein at least one sealing element is provided on said substrate holder and radially surrounds said vacuum openings.

33. (original) An apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said sealing element is elastic and is disposed across from a further sealing element, especially a sealing lip, that is provided at a periphery of said at least one opening.